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ABSTRACT

The Directions for the Future Conference focused on the roles, responsibilities, and challenges of developing a working relationship among community colleges and community agencies in realizing the total mission of education. The conference was co-sponsored by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges and the University of Oregon's Northwest Community Education Development Center and the Center for Educational Policy and Management. Twenty-four states and five Canadian provinces were represented. Paul Tremper, Executive Director of the National Community Education Association, gave the keynote address and spoke on the passage of the first federal community education act in 1974 and the growth of programs in the past ten years. A second session concerned the background and present status of community colleges. The third general session included a description of the establishment and expansion of community education in the Clackamas Community College District, a national perspective of community college-community school cooperation, and individual presentations by four model community colleges. In the fourth general session, representatives from nine state departments of education spoke on state policies, funding, and commitment to community education. A fifth session dealt with federal concerns in implementing community education. Administrative "charettes" were also held. (MB)

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DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

by Dale Collins

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Summary of the Conference on Community Colleges-Community Schools' proceedings at the University of Oregon on July 24-28, 1978

American Association of Community and Junior Colleges

Northwest Community Education Development Center and the
Center for Educational Policy and Management
University of Oregon

SUMMARY

Conference-July 24-28, 1978
University of Oregon, Eugene
Community Colleges-Community Schools

DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

A timely conference intended for community college and community school practitioners concerned with the role of education in the "community" they are responsible for serving.

The conference focus was on roles, responsibilities, and challenges of developing a working relationship among community colleges, community schools and other concerned community agencies in realizing the total mission of education today.

Twenty-four states were represented and five Canadian provinces. National, regional, and state leaders in community education were present as featured speakers, presentors and as "charette" leaders (a charette is a group administrative tool used to facilitate discussion and synthesis) during the last two days.

The conference was co-sponsored by AACJC and the University of Oregon's Northwest Community Education Development Center and the Center for Educational Policy and Management.

Paul Tremper, Executive Director of the National Community Education Association, gave the keynote address and spoke on the passage of the first federal act for community education in 1974 and the phenomenal growth of such programs in the past ten years. In 1968 there were only 2,000 community schools scattered in over 200 districts throughout the nation. Today, in 1978, there are over 6,000 community schools in over 1,800 districts throughout the fifty states. In 1968 one state legislature supported community education to the amount of $1,000,000. Today, eleven states support it to the amount of $50,000,000.

Reasons given by Tremper for community education's growth include:

1. Declining school enrollment and declining public support for public education.
2. Empty school rooms and buildings and their potential use.
3. Graying of America (by 1990, 20% of the population will be over 55 years of age).
4. Economy delivery of social services on the local and regional level.
5. Interest in greater utilization of existing resources.
6. H.U.D.'s increased emphasis and recommendation of the potential of community schools concept.
7. A demand for more openness.

He closed by emphasizing the great ne-d to obtain factual data on the optimum delivery of social services. Community development is a term presently being used quite widely to refer to community education and community schools.

At the 2nd General Session the background and present status of community colleges and community schools were explored in depth. As this summary is directed to persons knowledgeable as to community colleges, I'll briefly emphasize certain issues related to community schools.

Rather than a program per se, community schools are an idea, a philosophical notion that had its beliefs and goals formalized during the early 1930's by the Mott Foundation and the Kellogg Community Schools movement. It has since spread over the country and into foreign lands. Australia is presently far ahead of Canada and the United States in their development. The last 10 years has seen extensive growth in community schools and they are presently past any developmental model stage.

Community schools are a program delivery system, not a program in themselves. Their mandate is far beyond the power of one person, or for one institution to do. Every community possesses all aspects of a community schools system but they need help to put it all together in a viable operating manner.

Jack Menzie, pioneer definer, of aspects making up community schools listed six important goals:

1. Strengthen existing school programs
2. Expanding utilization of community physical facilities
3. Expansion of optional learning opportunities
4. To provide equal involvement opportunities for adults
5. Enhance and broaden opportunities between community agencies
6. Improve and involve more persons in decision making

At the Third General Session, Dr. John Hakonsen, President of Clackamas Community College made an excellent presentation reviewing establishment and expansion of community education programs and services in his district. He exphasized a sixth dimension of community colleges is community development. Too many people in the community are isolated from participation. Their call is "We are here and nobody is listening!" "We are not involved." "Do something to assist us!" A properous industrial nation such as ours doesn't provide enough for its young people. They grow up frustrated, a few become extremely dissatisfied or terrorists.

Community development can begin on a minor scale. It's a unit of a creative society, responsible for a creative and social harnessing of energies wherein we interact, assist and spur others to greater efforts. To get things started ordinary people will do nicely, you don't have to have heros. Have a toleration for slow beginnings and partial successes. People learn from their involvement, want to do more and the process will build on itself.

Suzanne Fletcher, Director, Center for Community Education, AACJC, spoke on a national view of community colleges - community schools cooperation. AACJC presently has two fulltime persons working nationally in this area. Larry Warford is AACJC field representative for 10 western states, including California. He is housed at the University of Oregon in Eugene and responds to needs over a wide area.

We are moving into a 3rd generation mode in community education since it's beginnings in the 1930's. There is a totality of needs within all communities. No single institution can do it all, it must be done in partnership with other community groups and agencies.

The community college is rapidly moving toward an older student clientele (30 is average age nationally), more part-time students, fewer full-time ones and an increase in non-credit programs and classes.

Some faculty and administrators are traditionalists and of no real help in beginning or working in a functioning community schools program. In fact, such persons can hinder or defeat such programs unless kept well informed and communicated with on a regular intensive basis. Change is just very difficult to bring about in the eduational scene.

Individual presentations were made by four model community colleges - community schools programs: 1) Clark College, Vancouver, Wash., 2) Mt. Hood Community College, Gresham, Ore., 3) N.W. Community College, Big Horn Basin, Wyom., and 4) Clackamas Community College, Oregon City, Oregon. Of the four, it appeared Clackamas' program was the best organized and has been working most effectively in the approximately six years it has been in operation.

In the Fourth General Session, representatives from nine state departments of education spoke on state policies, funding and commitment to community education. In all the states (Oregon, Nevada, Iowa, Ohio, Arizona, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming) there have been successes in the community colleges- community schools concept. Naturally, some have been more successful than others but it was interesting to see the optimism radiated by the group as a whole.

The Fifth General Session was conducted by James Gollathscheck, President of Valencia Community College, Orlando, Florida. Together with Erv Harlacher, he has recently written "The Community Renewal College." His thesis is,-Education is the only salvation of communities, the nation and the world and we must place the learning needs of the learner above institutionally based edcuation practices.

"Community based" sounds simple but it's really revolutionary. Change is occuring so rapidly that long before Toffler, Margaret Mead 17 years ago stated "It's no longer vertical transmission of knowledge we have to deal with but lateral transmission." The rate of change and the degree of change are simply astounding. We must make educational opportunities available to people, else we face alienation of large segments of the population from eduational institutions.

Some students will come to you and knock on your door, many others will not. We possess park-like campuses, insulated and isolated form the community. The demands of a campus doesn't give you time to find out what the non-traditional, part-time student needs. You must go to them. Generally only well educated people are coming to your main campus, you delude yourselves if you think otherwise.

Always before we've addressed the young and educated youth and education have been considered a vaccination against ignorance. Not true, ignorance is a recurring disease, if we stop in our quest for learning, we regress. The community and the college together, they can be equally productive or destructive.

Upgrading and renewal must constantly take place. If citizens are not functioning properly as persons then something drastic needs to be done to change this and change it effectively on a permanent basis.

Any federal funding for community based education will be only seed money but still is very important to have a well staffed resource development office in each communtiy college. Fees will be charged for many courses and any avocational or recreational course must be 125% self-supporting. This is the Robin Hood theory of having some programs support others as the need arises. Ultimately, of course, the entire program offered must be self-supporting. You have to draw lines unless you seek all possible sources of funding.

We need a system of on-going needs assessing and should never get hung up on definitions or terminology. Refuse to worry about who is doing what in my community. Sure we can coordinate, but that's not a turfdom or boundary worry. There's too much to do if we all worked full-time around the clock.

The last two days were primarily devoted to the charete. It was a well-structured, organized brain-storming session. We were broken down into six groups, each with its leader and Dr. Gollattscheck was charette facilitator. Each group had a synthesizer, a recorder, and a reporter. The groups explored intensively in certain areas and reported their findings back to all-conference meetings. The findings were further refined and accepted finally by the entire group.

These findings included a working definition of community education, a rationale for community colleges and community schools working together, impediments for community education articulation, essential elements of an ideal cooperative relationship and long term and short term strategies for delivery of services in community education.

The final general session featured Julie Englund, Director of Community Education Office, U. S. Office of Education. She spoke to some of the concerns the Federal government is experiencing in implementing community education in community colleges. She sees major barriers presently as being a) boundary concerns and b) trust factors.

Two bills, basically the same bill, are going through Congress at the present time to provide a more adequate funding for new community educational programs throughout this country. One is H.R. 15 (already passed) and the other is S1753, due to be considered by the Senate during August, 1978. This bill is an authorization bill and even if it passes an appropriations bill will have to be passed to provide the necessary monies.

The Senate bill, sponsored by Senator Harrison Williams of Rhode Island and 19 other Senators would, if funded, provide $500,000,000 toward community education. It may well be cut a great deal, undoubtedly it will not be funded at full level. Community colleges and other community groups will be eligible for funds under this act.

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